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SOURCE

Paris-Dakar.NIGER DEPUTY JOINS OVERSEAS INDEPENDENTS

The following information is based on an article by
Max Jalade, special correspondent, published in Paris-Dakar
on 20 December 1952 as a result of an interview with Zodi
Ikha, deputy from Niger.

Zodi Ikha recently left the UDSR (Union Democratique et Socialiste de
la Resistance, Democratic and Socialist Union of the Resistance) in the
French National Assembly and joined the Independants d'Outre-Mer (Overseas
Independents) group, which is headed by Leopold Senghor, deputy from Senegal.

Zodi's change of parliamentary affiliation is of great importance to the
Independants d'Outre-Mer, for, with him in their ranks, they now have suffi-
cient members to break away from the MRP (Mouvement Republicain Populaire,
Populaire Republican Movement), with which they are affiliated, and become an
autonomous group, if they so wish.

Zodi, who has since gone to Niamey, Niger, to attend a meeting of the
local General Council, stated his reasons for joining the Independants d'
Outre-Mer as follows:

"I left the UDSR as a result of prolonged disagreement on local policy
with Deputy Coniat, my colleague from Niger, with whom I was elected to the
National Assembly in June 1951. We had previously been cofounders of the
UNIS (Union Nigerienne des Independants et Sympathisants, Niger Union of
Independents and Sympathizers). When Coniat joined the UDSR group in the
National Assembly, I followed suit, mostly because we were members of the
same party, although later he left the UNIS.

"In the UDSR group I found representatives of the RDA (Rassemblement
Democratique Africain, African Democratic Rally), a party against which I
run for election to the National Assembly. The presence of RDA members in
the UDSR group, coupled with the fact that Coniat and I failed to come to an
understanding, led me to leave the group.

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"My main reason for joining the Independants d'Outre-Mer group is that I believe that through it overseas representatives in Parliament can best serve the interests of their respective territories without necessarily being pre-occupied with problems pertaining primarily to the mother country."

After attending the meeting of the General Council in Niamey, Zodi will make a speaking tour which will take him, among other places, to Zinder and Tahoua. Later, he will attend the congress of the Independants d'Outre-Mer in Bobo Dioulasso, following which he will return to Paris.

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